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Food and Home Notes

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Calorie watching? Most fresh, raw unsweetened fruits contain fewer than 100 calories.

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Don't forget the good sources of iron in your diet...raisins, dates, prunes, peaches, and apricots...one half cup serving of most dried fruits provides at least one-sixth of the iron recommended for the normal healthy person per day.

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Don't waste the sirup or liquid from canned fruits. You can add the liquids to gelatin salads or deserts without adding too much sweetness.

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A serving of fruit is usually considered one medium-size apple, a banana, orange, peach, or pear; two or three apricots, figs or plums; or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit and liquid.

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Unripe fruits should be left to ripen in open air at room temperature and out of direct sunlight.

E N E R G Y

— AND HOME WEATHERIZING

Effective "weatherizing" around your home means better insulation, weather-stripping, storm doors and windows, and repairing substandard (or deteriorated) parts of the house. Each in their own way help to conserve fuel and energy. These "weatherizing" projects generally save homeowners money and often prevent health hazards or personal discomforture.

Rural homeowners who are interested in weatherizing their homes and can meet certain limits on annual family income -- may be eligible for credit of up to \$1500 through the Farmers Home Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Usually effective weatherizing can be done in most homes for about \$500 per home annually.

Grants for other home improvements are also available to very low-income people, age 62 or over. But -- for home weatherizing loans -- contact the local Rural Electric Cooperative. Program Aid 1186 "Home Weatherizing Loans Through Rural Electric Cooperatives" details this information from Farmers Home Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

P E P P E R

— A NEW INSECTICIDE?

Black pepper -- the pungent dried fruit used as a condiment on most dinner tables -- may have other uses. It is now being considered for possible use as an insecticide to protect stored food products, according to Dr. Helen Su, a U.S. Department of Agriculture chemist.

Treatments with ground black pepper and its alcohol extract were found to be highly toxic to both the rice weevil and the cowpea weevil as reported by the Agricultural Research Service Stored-Products Insects Research and Development Laboratory in Savannah, Georgia. Dr. Su believes that the black pepper should be a safe promising source of naturally occurring insecticide.

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H O U S I N G

— SURVEY REPORT

Housing conditions in the United States have improved in the last 25 years, according to a new report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture -- however, special housing problems still remain in many rural areas. Eight percent of nonmetropolitan area families still lived (in 1975) in substandard housing, according to the Economic Research Service. Only four percent lived in substandard housing in metropolitan areas.

New construction in the rural areas accounted for the improvements in housing conditions. But, according to the report, there were still 1.9 million families living in substandard housing in 1975. The poor occupied 57% of the non-metro substandard housing while households headed by an elderly person (referring to persons over 65 years of age) occupied 35% of this housing in 1975.

COST OF FOOD AT HOME FOR A WEEK (MAY 1977)

	Thrifty plan	Low-cost plan	Moderate- cost plan	Liberal plan
FAMILIES				
Young couple.....	\$23.40	\$30.90	\$38.80	\$46.70
Elderly couple.....	21.20	27.70	34.30	41.00
Family of 4 with preschool children.....	33.00	43.00	53.80	64.70
Family of 4 with elementary school children.....	39.80	51.90	65.20	78.30
INDIVIDUALS*				
Women				
20-54 years.....	9.60	12.70	15.80	18.90
55 years and over.....	8.80	11.50	14.20	16.80
Men				
20-54 years.....	11.70	15.40	19.50	23.60
55 years and over.....	10.50	13.70	17.00	20.50
Children				
1-2 years.....	5.30	6.80	8.40	10.00
3-5 years.....	6.40	8.10	10.10	12.20
6-8 years.....	8.20	10.60	13.30	15.90
9-11 years.....	10.30	13.20	16.60	19.90
Girls 12-19 years.....	9.80	12.60	15.60	18.70
Boys 12-14 years.....	10.90	14.00	17.60	21.10
15-19 years.....	12.00	15.50	19.40	23.40

* Cost of food at home for any family can be figured by totaling costs shown for individuals of sex and age of various members of the family as follows:

- o For those eating all meals at home (or carrying some meals from home), use amounts shown.
- o For those eating some meals out, deduct 5 percent from amount in table for each meal not eaten at home. Thus, for a person eating lunch out 5 days a week, subtract 25 percent or one-fourth the cost shown.
- o For guests, include for each meal eaten, 5 percent of amount shown in table for the proper age group.

Next, adjust the total figure if more or fewer than four people generally eat at the family table. Costs shown are for individuals in 4-person families. Adjustment is necessary because larger families tend to buy and use foods more economically than smaller ones. Thus, for a 1-person family, add 20 percent; 2 persons, add 10 percent; 3, add 5 percent; 4, use as is; 5 or 6, subtract 5 percent; 7 or more, subtract 10 percent.

Note: The publication "Family Food Budgeting for Good Meals and Good Nutrition," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 94, describes USDA's thrifty food plan (used in setting the coupon allotment in the Food Stamp Program) and the three more costly plans, on which these costs are based. Single copies are available from the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Request publication by name and number and include your ZIP code.

FRUIT TREES

— AND NO FRUIT?

Some fruit trees do not bear fruit ...but there is a reason. The health of your tree and the environment, its fruiting habits, and the care you give it all have direct effect on whether it bears fruit -- or does not. Weak or diseased trees produce fruit of poor quality or no fruit at all. Insects take their toll also, according to plant genetic specialists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

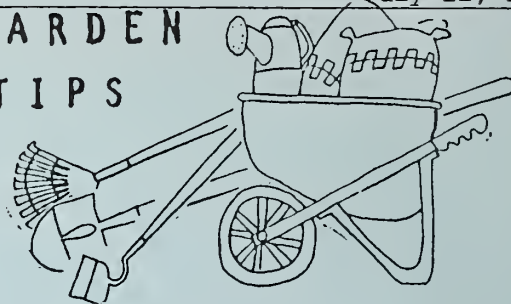
Most fruit trees need to be pollinated -- otherwise they will not bear fruit...even though they may blossom. It is often necessary to plant at least one tree of each gender near the other. Almost all citrus trees are "self-fruitful" -- apple, pear, sweet cherry and Japanese and American plum trees.

Plant at least two varieties of apple trees near one another. Golden Delicious, a self-fruitful type is one of the few exceptions to this rule.

Some fruit trees (such as apples) bear fruit heavily one year and sparsely the next -- that's called "biennial bearing".

Fruit trees need full sunlight for best production...they also need adequate space to develop their root systems.

It's true that most hardy fruit trees need a certain amount of cold winter weather -- but extreme cold can be a problem. Certain precautions may be taken to prevent serious damage. Leaflet Number 172 on "Why Fruit Trees Fail to Bear" is available from the Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

GARDEN
TIPS

Want to try rooting boxwood cuttings? Anytime of the year will usually do, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists. You can often root the cuttings in a flower pot that is kept covered with a plastic bag. Cuttings will form roots in about 2 months.

* * *

Take cuttings from roses and spring flowering shrubs in midsummer when the stems are no longer succulent but have not become hard.

* * *

If your soil is tight clay, or underlain with hardpan, be careful not to overwater.

* * *

A special "needle" attachment to your garden hose is a useful gadget. You can inject water and water soluble fertilizer into the root zone...which is especially useful in watering curbside trees.

* * *

Need shade-tolerant trees? Try planting beeches or hemlocks.

* * *

Don't scrape the tree bark with your lawn mower...it can cause serious wounds that may get infected.

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